

CITY COUNCIL REPORT

DATE: November 2, 2015

TO: Mayor and Council

FROM: Michael O'Connor, Public Works Section Director

THRU: Steve Zimmerman, Parks Manager
Rebecca Sayers, Interim Recreation Services Director
Erik Solberg, Public Works Director

CC: Josh Copley, City Manager
Jerene Watson, Barbara Goodrich, Deputy City Managers
Leadership

SUBJECT: Adaptive Facilities

Council has requested information on adaptive playgrounds and recreation facilities. More specifically, the following questions have been presented:

1. What adaptive facilities are available, both public and private, in our community?
2. Does the City have specific policies that address adaptive playgrounds?
3. What adaptive technology is in our parks and recreation facilities?
4. What types of adaptive facilities are going to be installed at Thorpe Park and what is the timeframe for those renovations?

Discussion

What adaptive facilities are available, both public and private, in our community?

All of the City's parks and amenities are ADA compliant. The playground equipment complies with guidelines for wheelchair access through the use of transfer stations, ramps, and engineered wood fiber surfacing. Recently, adaptive features were installed at the playground as part of the Bushmaster Park improvements.

The City's recreation facilities are ADA compliant and include some adaptive equipment. There is a zero-entry pool and assisted-access lift at the Aquaplex. Some of the exercise equipment at the Aquaplex and Joe C. Montoya Community Center is equipped with removable seats to allow wheel-chair-bound members to use the machines. The indoor basketball courts at the Aquaplex and the Hal Jensen Recreation Center have hoops that have the ability to be lowered if requested to accommodate someone in a wheelchair. At the Joe C. Montoya Community Center, visual enhancement devices (electric and manual) are available to help the visually impaired read books, newspapers, magazines, etc. Braille board games are available and the staff offers programs for all abilities.

As for private facilities, according to information obtained by Recreation staff, the YMCA and Flagstaff Athletic Clubs are ADA compliant and provide resources similar to those provided at the City facilities described above.

This information was acquired by the Recreation staff continuously networking with the YMCA and Flagstaff Athletic Clubs to provide the programming needs of the community.

Does the City have specific policies that address adaptive playgrounds?

The City does not have a specific policy that addresses adaptive playgrounds, although there has been equipment installed that are modified or designed for people with disabilities.

The City has been following the national guidelines for ADA accessible playgrounds since 1990 when the ADA guidelines for accessible design were instituted.

The Department of Justice published the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) title III regulations, which included the ADA Standards for Accessible Design (1991 Standards), on July 26, 1991.

In 2004 the ADAAG standards were put in place. The 2004 ADAAG standards are the scoping and technical requirements for accessibility to sites, facilities, buildings, and elements by individuals with disabilities. The requirements are to be applied during the design, construction, additions to, and alteration of sites, facilities, buildings, and elements to the extent required by regulations issued by Federal agencies under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA).

The Department of Justice published revised regulations for Titles II and III of the ADA in the Federal Register on September 15, 2010. These regulations adopted revised, enforceable accessibility standards called the 2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design (2010 Standards) and permitted the 1991 Standards to be used until March 14, 2012.

On March 15, 2012, the 2010 Standards became the enforceable standards under Titles II and III for new construction, alterations, program accessibility, and barrier removal.

Parks has been staying compliant with the all of the ADA standards, the American Society for Testing and Materials guidelines (ASTM - F-1929-99) and the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) for maintaining or improving our parks.

Any maintenance or improvements to parks will address, and have addressed ADA accessibility. This is a standard practice within the Parks section. Staff researches equipment, trends and all possibilities whenever the opportunity arises. This research helped develop the Bushmaster Park design.

What adaptive equipment/technology is in our parks and recreation facilities?

A rubberized surface has been installed around the adaptive play equipment at Bushmaster Park. Although this material is very expensive, staff felt it was worthwhile to install it as the community requested it during the public outreach process. To become more adaptive, this material could be used in future improvements to parks.

A zip line feature with a harnessed seat, a wheelchair accessible glider unit, an accessible merry go round unit, wheel chair ramp and a roller feature have been installed at Bushmaster Park during the recent improvements. This equipment allows someone in a wheelchair to utilize them and become involved.

What types of adaptive facilities are going to be installed at Thorpe Park and what is the timeframe for those renovations?

At this time, Thorpe Park is not scheduled for any playground improvements. The larger equipment at the park will be 20 years old in 2016 and the tot unit for children 2-5 years old was installed in 2000. Lifespan of playground equipment is 20 years and these pieces are in good condition based on recent inspections. Hence, new equipment is currently not in the Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) for Parks. That being said, Parks has discussed installing adaptive equipment at Thorpe Park if funds become available when the need arises.

Recommendation/Conclusion

This report is for information only.